

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A releasable ball mounting apparatus, comprising:

a ball mounting device comprising:

first and second shafts; and

first and second releasable

fasteners, wherein the first releasable fastener is coupled to the first shaft and the second releasable fastener is coupled to the second shaft and wherein the first and the second releasable fasteners are configured for releasable mounting of a ball.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first and the second shafts are aligned substantially away from each other.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first and the second shafts comprise first and second respective elements selected from the group consisting of a rope and a rod.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the ball mounting device further comprises a member from which the first and the second shafts extend.

5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first and second shafts are first and second ends of a rope.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first and the second releasable fasteners are configured to release the ball when the ball is hit with a hitting device.

7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the ball is a baseball.

8. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the hitting device is selected from the group consisting of a bat, a club, a racket, a stick, a bare hand, and a gloved hand.

9. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the ball mounting device further comprises first and second tubular members configured to rotate around the first and the second shafts, respectively, wherein the first and the second releasable fasteners are coupled to the first and the second shafts via the first and the second tubular members.

10. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein each of the first and the second releasable fasteners comprises two complementary halves, a first of the halves being coupled to its respective shaft and a second of the halves being fixed to the ball.

11. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the first and the second releasable fasteners comprise a hook and loop type fastener.

12. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the first and the second releasable fasteners comprise a piercing half and a pierceable half.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the piercing half comprises at least one pointed member and the pierceable half comprises rubber.

14. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a tether from which the ball mounting device is suspended.

15. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the tether is adjustable in length.

16. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the tether comprises a non-elastic string.

17. The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising a substantially rigid member, wherein the tether is suspended from a first end of the substantially rigid member.

18. The apparatus of claim 17 further comprising a hinge that is configured to be suspended from a member, wherein an upper portion of the substantially rigid member is attached to the hinge such that the hinge constrains the rigid member to rotate about a substantially horizontal axis.

19. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the substantially rigid member is attached to the hinge such that the first end of the substantially rigid member rotates in a substantially vertical plane.

20. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the tether is releasable from the substantially rigid member.

21. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the tether is configured to release from the substantially

rigid member when the tether has a tension greater than a threshold tension.

22. The apparatus of claim 20 further comprising an object attached to the tether, wherein the first end of the substantially rigid member has a passage configured to hold the object until the tether has a tension greater than a threshold tension.

23. A ball hitting practice apparatus, said apparatus comprising:

- a substantially rigid member having a first end and a second end;

- a hinge that is attached at or near the first end of the substantially rigid member and is configured to be secured to a support member such that the hinge constrains the substantially rigid member to rotate about a substantially horizontal axis;

- a tether attached at or near the second end of the substantially rigid member; and

- a ball mounting device suspended from the tether, wherein the ball mounting device allows for releasable mounting of a ball and wherein the ball mounting device is configured to release the ball when the ball is hit by user.